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FM AMEMBASSY MUSCAT
TO RUCPDO/DEPT OF COMMERCE WASHINGTON DC
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INFO GULF COOPERATION COUNCIL COLLECTIVE
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RUEHMS/AMEMBASSY MUSCAT

C O N F I D E N T I A L MUSCAT 000365

NOFORN
SIPDIS
COMMERCE FOR DOC/ITA (J.REITZE)
STATE FOR NEA/ARP, PM/RSAT (J.SCHWENK) AND EEB/CBA (J.THOMPSON AND
D.WINSTEAD)

C O R R E C T E D C O P Y (Addressee)

E.O. 12958: DECL: 2019/04/22
TAGS: [PREL](#) [MASS](#) [ETRD](#) [MU](#)
SUBJECT: OPEN FIELD FOR MILITARY FIGHTER SALES TO OMAN

REF: A) MUSCAT 156; B) MUSCAT 97; C) MUSCAT 82

CLASSIFIED BY: Gary A. Grappo, Ambassador, U.S. Department of State,
U.S. Embassy - Muscat; REASON: 1.4(B), (D)

11. (U) This is an Action Request. Please see paragraph 3.

12. (C/NF) At a diplomatic event on April 21, a local British representative for BAE Systems told the DCM that the Omani government has walked back from what seemed an imminent decision to buy a squadron of Eurofighter Typhoons to help replace its aging Jaguar fighters (ref B). Due to concerns over the high price tag for the Typhoons in conjunction with a fall in government revenues related to lower oil prices, Oman was accordingly exploring other options for new fighter aircraft, he claimed. [Note: These options include U.S.-made F-16s and French Rafale aircraft, which French President Sarkozy heavily promoted during his February 2009 visit to Muscat. End Note.] The company representative added that BAE Systems was not trying to salvage the Typhoon deal as it had "already made [its] money." Rather, it was the British government that was directly trying to offload to the Omanis a squadron of Tranche III Eurofighters it had previously committed to purchase -- "the last twelve from the RAF production run."

13. (C/NF) Action Request and Comment: The BAE representative's comments track with the Minister of National Economy's recommendation to the Sultan to delay a final decision on military aircraft purchases until at least the middle of the year (ref A). As the competition for the sale of new fighter aircraft to Oman appears to be wide open, it is imperative that Lockheed Martin and the U.S. government step up advocacy efforts if we are to convince the Omanis of the many benefits of the acquisition of additional F-16s. If ever the cost/performance advantages of the F-16 is to trump the UK political advantage, the time is now. Washington agencies should accordingly advise Lockheed to move immediately with their best offer. End Action Request and Comment.
GRAPPO